

Shine like stars in the world
Philippians 2:15

WESTERN Recorder

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2011 SBC ANNUAL MEETING

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SBC 2011: Missions focus

Newly revised mission board assignments top action in Phoenix

By Todd Deaton
Editor

Phoenix—Revisions of the International and North American Mission boards' ministry assignments to begin implementation of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force's recommendations approved by messengers at last year's annual meeting highlighted Southern Baptist Convention action in Phoenix June 14-15.

SBC messengers reaffirmed their commitment to the Cooperative Program as the most effective means of mobilizing churches to penetrate the world's lostness, and they adopted a CP allocation budget for 2011-12 of \$186 million, which will distribute \$93.37 million (50.2 percent) to the IMB, \$42.38 million (22.79 percent) to NAMB and \$40.77 million (21.92 percent) to the convention's six seminaries.

Registration in Phoenix barely passed 4,810, making it the lowest attended convention in more than 65 years. The previous low mark in the last 10 years also was set in Phoenix in 2003 when messengers totaled 7,077. Approximately 230 Kentuckians attended this year.

□ See SBC 2011 ... *Page 4*



Messengers arrive for the 154th Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 14-15 at the Phoenix Convention Center. The two-day conference was attended by fewer than 5,000 messengers, the fewest to attend an SBC annual meeting since 1944. Only 4,301 messengers attended the convention in Atlanta that year, which saw the country in the midst of World War II. According to SBC officials, more than 230 Kentucky Baptists attended this year's meeting. (Photo by Kent Harville/NAMB)

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Kentucky Changers: Impacting lives of those less fortunate

By Robin Bass
Partnerships Director

Mount Washington—Maudie Bell understands the meaning of hard work.

The 87-year-old welder's wife not only raised three of her own kids, she nurtured nearly 30 other children in her home through Kentucky's foster care program—many of whom, she said, were mentally or physically challenged. Between fixing meals and routine housework, Bell also found time to milk cows and work alongside her husband in the fields on the family's farm.

After her husband, James Edward Bell, died three years ago, Bell said she just could not keep up with all the repairs associated with a homestead that has been in the family for six generations. Add in the fact that her own health was failing and it is easy to comprehend how the exterior of her home was showing signs of neglect.

"I haven't been able to do anything," Bell said while holding on to her front porch railing for support.

So much around the Bullitt Coun-

ty house needs to be painted, mended or outright replaced that Bell was unable to pinpoint her greatest need. She motioned toward a power chair on the porch that was covered with a thin layer of dust. The equipment holds for her promises of independence and mobility, but the uneven rock path leading from her front door created a barrier Bell had not been able to maneuver.

Then, Bell smiled as she looked across her yard. Intermingled with her clucking hens was the sound of teenage chatter as a crew with Kentucky Changers busily moved about the home. On one side, a couple of young men were cutting foam insulation. By the drive, two young ladies spray painted lattice fencing. The rest were covering the front of the wood frame house with vinyl siding. As for the rocky, unstable path, it was gone. The students already had prepped the area for a smooth concrete walkway.

"I can't describe what this means to me. I've never had anyone do this much for me," Bell said. "These kids

□ See Kentucky Changers ... *Page 2*



'I LOVE THEM ALL' Mount Washington homeowner Maudie Bell (center) stands with the members they made for her to remember their time together. Bell's home and farm have been in her family for six generations and had fallen into disrepair since her husband's death three years ago. The teen and adult volunteer laborers made several repairs to Bell's home, like replacing a rocky path from the front door with a new concrete walkway so Bell can better maneuver her motorized wheelchair. (Photo by Robin Bass)

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Louisville WMU director honored with national WMU award

By Anna Cox
Woman's Missionary Union

Phoenix—A Kentucky Baptist Woman's Missionary Union director was honored last week for her work with Girls in Action.

Laura Morris, a member of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Louisville, was given the Dr. Martha Myers GA Alumna of Distinction Award during the National WMU Missions Celebration and annual meeting in Phoenix June 13.

Morris developed a passion for missions early through her GA training, according to Jeanne Bryant, a fellow church member who has known Morris for nearly 40 years.

"Laura was about 8 years old when her family came to Bethlehem Baptist Church, and she immediately became active in GAs," Bryant recalled. "She was interested in learning about and participating in mission work for our Lord, and she took part in

our mission studies, day camps and missions projects. I think Laura's life and personal interest in helping people to know God's love reflects this early missions involvement through GAs."

Morris served as GAs director for many years at Bethlehem Baptist, but when she assumed responsibilities as the church's WMU director, she mentored other women to head up the girls' missions program.

"Laura eagerly seeks effective leadership for the (missions) programs we have and for new missions opportunities," said Lisa Azinger, the current GAs director at Bethlehem Baptist, who described Morris as a dear friend and mentor. "She inspires others to become involved, ... serving tirelessly and continuing to help in every program. She has passed

down rich traditions which give our church a sense of unity and purpose when it comes to missions."



Laura Morris

Love is 'very evident'

Bethlehem Baptist Pastor David Hughes said he has witnessed Morris' involvement in missions and education for more than 20 years.

"Laura has worked with a high level of commitment to involve young girls in missions education and missions experiences," Hughes noted. "Her love for the girls in her care and her commitment to their Christian development is very evident."

Kentucky WMU Executive Director Joy Bolton, who nominated Morris for this award, agreed with Hughes.

"Laura is a great role model for the girls in her church, many of which come from homes that aren't too stable," Bolton shared. "In her, these girls see a confident, loving, committed leader who loves them and invests in their lives."

In addition to serving as WMU director, Morris also is a GA leader, associational WMU leader, part of a Women on Mission prayerwalking group and a Kentucky WMU executive board member. She holds a master's degree in education and teaches special-needs children in grades 1-5.

Established in 2004, the Myers award is given annually to recognize a GA alumna who influences the lives of others for Christ, and serves as a positive role model for girls. It is named in honor of Martha Myers, a medical missionary who was killed in 2002 in Yemen after serving there for 24 years.

Kentucky Changers

Impacting lives of those less fortunate

Continued from page 1

are a special bunch of people. I could never thank them enough. I love them all."

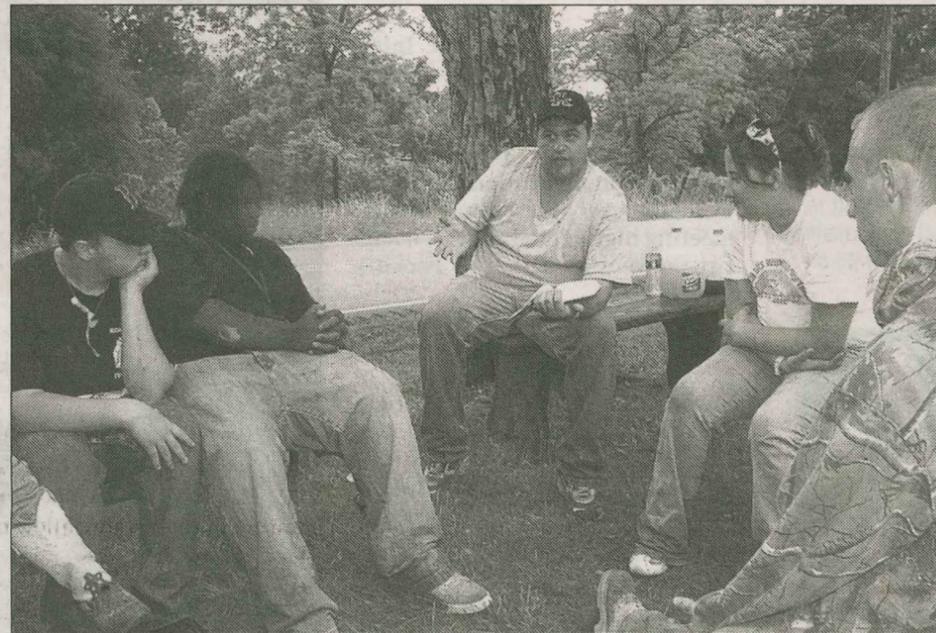
The students at Bell's home were among 180 youth serving with Kentucky Changers last week in Bullitt, Nelson and Jefferson counties. Led by more than 85 adult volunteers, the students provided much-needed home repairs for about 20 low-income residents in the region—all at no cost to the homeowners. Students also were encouraged to build relationships with the homeowners during their week of service, and to share both the love of Christ and the gospel message.

Joe Ball, youth ministry director with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, said 2011 marks the 18th year of the Kentucky Changers ministry—an initiative modeled after the North American Mission Board's youth missions program, World Changers.

Lives changed all around

Ball, who has been involved since its inception, said Kentucky Changers has been just as much about impacting the students' lives as the people they serve.

"We encourage the students to make



BREAK FOR GOD'S WORD Cody Lockhart (center) leads a devotion with fellow Kentucky Changers at one of the many project sites in Bullitt County last week. Lockhart, of Clearfork Baptist Church in Russell Springs, was teaching from 1 Timothy 4:12,14. (Photos by Robin Bass)

much of Jesus, to share their stories with the homeowners and with anyone they come in contact with," Ball said. "I think Kentucky Changers is an excellent way for students to do more and be more for Christ."

Ball said his hopes are that students will learn much more than carpentry skills during the week, his desire is for them to learn that "they can be ministers to people wherever they are."

Over the years, Ball said several Kentucky Changers alumni have gone on to devote their lives to the ministry of Christ.

Tyler Puckett, of Glensboro Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg, said he returned for a second summer with Kentucky Chang-

ers because of the joy he receives from helping others. "God helps me help them and it helps me be a better person," the 14-year-old said.

Fellow Glensboro youth Makayla Gamble, 14, agreed the experience can have a profound effect on the hearts of teens. "Whenever you come here, you go home a different person. It changes your attitude completely," she said.

Last year, more than 1,000 students from 51 churches across Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio and Virginia completed 90 repair or renovation projects. This week, Kentucky Changers continue their hands-on ministry in Paducah and will descend upon Maysville July 2-9.

Ky. Baptists' CP gifts drop sharply from April to May

Louisville—After reaching a Cooperative Program giving milestone early in May, Kentucky Baptists' total CP giving for the month was down sharply compared to April.

CP gifts of more than \$2.1 million in March and \$1.95 million in April made possible the \$700 million milestone in support that Kentucky Baptists have provided through the Cooperative Program since the unified giving program began in 1925.

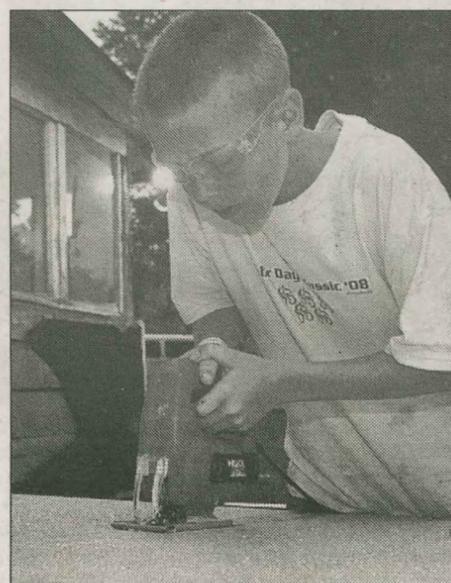
Kentucky Baptists gave \$1,576,616 to missions through the Cooperative Program in May.

Despite the drop, giving is less than \$125,000 behind the Kentucky Baptist Convention's spendable budget for the year according to Lowell Ashby, the KBC's business services team leader.

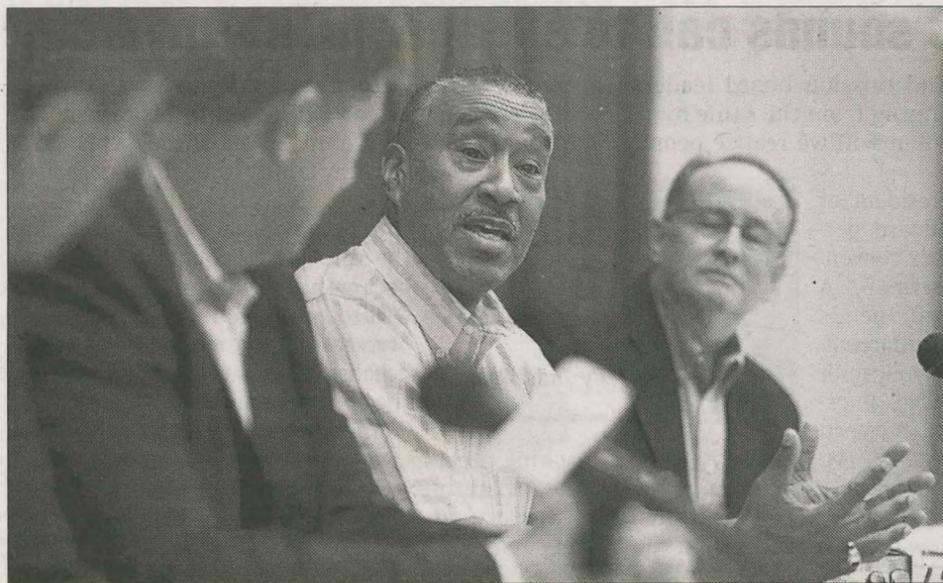
"May's shortfall was expected given the month ending on Tuesday after Memorial Day," Ashby said. "Hopefully June will begin a strong final quarter of CP receipts to meet or exceed our spendable budget."

Billy Compton, KBC's executive associate for Cooperative Program and resources, said it is important for Kentucky Baptists to remember the many missions, ministries and leadership development opportunities funded through CP dollars.

"For example, Kentucky Baptists have made possible the annual Super Saturday training events for the past 20 years," Compton said. "This is something that individuals and churches make possible year after year, so it is understandable that they might forget about that investment—but I never want them to forget."



■ Far left: Tessa Perez (left), 18, of Burgin Baptist Church in Harrodsburg, and Leslie Sloan, 14, of Bagdad Baptist Church, give lattice boards a fresh coat of paint before securing the privacy screen around Maudie Bell's front porch. ■ Left: Aaron Shaw, 13, of Hillcrest Baptist Church Hopkinsville, carefully cuts a thick piece of foam insulation for Bell's home. The youth were among 180 Kentucky Changers providing free home repairs for low-income families in Bullitt, Jefferson and Nelson counties last week. This year marks the 18th year for the ministry, patterned after NAMB's World Changers ministry. Students are working this week in Paducah and in Maysville July 2-9.



Robert Anderson (center), pastor of Colonial Baptist Church in Randallstown, Md., and other members of the Executive Committee's ethnic study workgroup answer questions during a press conference June 14 following day one of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Phoenix, Ariz. Also pictured is Scott Kilgore (right), senior associate pastor of Crossland Community Church in Bowling Green. (Photo by Bill Bangham/BP)

Southern Baptists looking to minorities to jumpstart growth

By Adelle Banks

Phoenix—Southern Baptists last week adopted a plan to try to turn baptism rates in their top leadership posts as they face continuing reports of stagnant baptism rates and declining membership.

SBC messengers backed the recommendation for intentionally including minorities as nominees for positions, speakers at the annual meeting, and staff speakers for its seminaries and mission boards.

Before the vote, Executive Committee President Frank Page acknowledged the need for "measurable information" to help Southern Baptists evaluate their progress on ethnic relations.

"I believe we are living in a day and time where there will be increased ethnic involvement and increased sensitivity to ethnic diversity within our convention," Page pledged to Southern Baptist messengers.

"In the principle of honesty, I tell you we have not done as we ought."

The move toward greater diversity comes as the predominantly white denomination grapples with a 2010 baptism rate that was down 5 percent from 2009 and a 0.15 percent drop in membership—the fourth consecutive year of decline.

The recommendation was the result of two years of study after a Korean pastor from Boston requested an examination of how ethnic churches and their leaders could be more actively involved.

On the convention floor, messengers defeated a move to change the language of the statement to appoint convention leaders "who are the most gospel-minded regardless of their ethnic background."

"If we keep the gospel as the center, everything else will follow and take place," said Channing Kilgore, the Tennessee delegate who offered the amendment.

Others countered that the intentional language was necessary.

"We cannot any longer be a convention that is basically a white convention that anybody can come to," said Pastor Jim Goforth, who leads a multicultural church in Florissant, Mo. "We must intentionally be a convention that reaches out to everybody, and until the stage looks like we want the pew to look like, it won't be that way. It doesn't happen by accident."

In recent decades, the convention has passed 11 resolutions seeking "greater ethnic participation"—including a 1995 resolution apologizing for its past defense of

slavery—but church leaders deemed them insufficient.

"In spite of the convention's frequent affirmations expressing its desire to see greater ethnic involvement and participation in SBC life, the convention has not adopted a consistent means by which it can ascertain participation of ethnic churches and church leaders in convention life," the the ethnic study report reads.

Dwight McKissic, a black Texas pastor who has called for the denomination to be more proactive on inclusiveness, said he stayed home this year because of the dearth of minorities on the annual meeting stage.

McKissic, who is pastor of a predominantly black congregation, recently helped launch a new Southern Baptist church with a multicultural congregation.

McKissic and other Southern Baptist leaders say the moves toward diversity include the election of New Orleans pastor Fred Luter, an African-American, as first vice president. But even if Luter is elected president next year, as many hope, McKissic said there still will be more to do.

"The SBC (will have) really dealt seriously with their racial issues and past when they put a minority in charge" of a mission board or seminary, he said.

David Lema Jr., a Cuba native and associate director of theological education for Florida Baptists, said the Executive Committee's support for greater inclusiveness means the issue is no longer a matter of a "voice crying in the wilderness" but a more authoritative stance.

"I believe that the Southern Baptist Convention is turning a corner, and it's turning a corner not just of awareness but it's a corner now of reality, of action," he said.

Southern Baptist leaders say half the churches started in the last decade were predominantly African-American or ethnic, and the number of churches with mostly minority membership increased from 13 percent to 18.5 percent between 1998 and 2008.

Ken Weathersby of the North American Mission Board said he encourages the more than two dozen evangelists affiliated with the entity to evangelize beyond their particular communities.

"We are not commanded just to plant among people that look like us," he said. "We are commanded to plant churches and commanded to make disciples among all ethnics." (RNS)

EC issues '1 percent challenge' for CP

Phoenix—Southern Baptist pastors have been challenged to lead their congregations to increase the percentages of their budgets for the denomination by a percent.

Frank Page, president of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, issued his "1 percent challenge" in a report at the convention's annual meeting in Phoenix last week.

The challenge asks that churches currently giving 4 percent through the unified giving plan that supports the work of both Baptist state conventions and national and international ministries of the SBC consider moving that up to 5 percent; those from 10 percent to 11 percent; those from 1 percent to 2 percent, and so on.



Frank Page

"Our Cooperative Program ministries have decreased every year for many years," Page said in his first report to the convention since his election last year. "Some of your budget committees are already at work preparing next year's budget. This is the time to go home and say, 'Let's do 1 percent more.'"

Page, a former pastor, said if the national average of CP giving by churches increased from the current 5.8 percent to 6.8 percent, the combined amount would grow from the current \$500 million range to nearly \$600 million. That \$100 million, he said, would enable state conventions to do more work with church planting in their states, allow the appointment of 380 international missionaries and help pay for the educations

of 16,000 students at six SBC seminaries.

Executive Committee reports showed that the economic downturn in 2008-09 took a toll on offering plates in Southern Baptist churches. The 2011 Book of Reports showed members in more than 45,000 churches associated with the SBC gave more than \$10.8 billion in titles and offerings in 2008-09. That represented a 2.5 percent decrease from \$11.1 billion collected in 2007-08.

Receipts of the Cooperative Program fell from \$548 million to \$525 million—a 4 percent decline. State conventions suffered the most, declining from \$343 million to \$326 million (5 percent) while the SBC share fell 2.2 percent, from \$204.3 million to \$199.8 million.

Page said in his mission across the country, he has found that Southern Baptists "need a new commitment to the principle of trust."

"I have discovered that there is little trust in our entities, little trust in our Executive Committee, little trust in our state conventions, little trust anywhere," he said. "It is time for God's people to learn to trust each other again and to rebuild a covenant of trust."

Page said the Executive Committee is trying to set an example for engendering trust by reducing bureaucracy. Already one of the smallest SBC entities, Page cut seven jobs from the Executive Committee staff, a 19 percent reduction, and reduced spending by \$1.1 million, more than 13 percent. (ABP)

Page calls for unity, selflessness among So. Baptists to right ship

By Mark Kelly

Phoenix—If Southern Baptists are going to fulfill their God-given mission in a lost world, they must deal with fragmentation and self-centeredness and recommit themselves to gratitude, trust, unified ministry and honesty, Frank Page told convention messengers last week in Phoenix.

"We have been headed in the wrong direction in several ways," the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee president said.

"Our convention is fracturing into various groups, some theological, most methodological. Sometimes there is an honest desire of opinion, but often there is self-centeredness that frequently mirrors our own culture," he explained. "Christ-like selflessness is our only hope."

While many have lamented a decline in giving through the Cooperative Program, Page cited statistics that showed total mission expenditures in SBC churches also have declined over the past 20 years. In 1989, congregations allocated 16.5 percent of their total receipts to missions; by 2009 that had declined to 12.32 percent.

"What this means is that we have been keeping more of our dollars at home," Page noted. "While the Cooperative Program certainly has taken its hit, it is our total mission giving that is the real victim."

As a show of unity and support for cooperative missions, Page called to the platform the heads of Southern Baptist entities, Baptist state convention executives and a number of ethnic fellowship presidents

who had signed a document titled "Affirmation of Unity and Cooperation." It includes five core pledges:

- We pledge to maintain a relationship of mutual trust, behaving ourselves trustworthily before one another, and trusting one another as brothers and sisters indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God.

- We pledge to attribute the highest motives to those engaged in local church ministries and those engaged in denominational service in any level of convention life—motives that originate within hearts truly desiring to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we also serve.

- We pledge to affirm the value of cooperative ministry as the most effective and efficient means of reaching a lost world with the message of the gospel.

- We pledge to embrace our brothers and sisters of every ethnicity, race and language as equal partners in our collective ministries to engage all people groups with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- We pledge to continue to honor and affirm proportional giving through the Cooperative Program as the most effective means of mobilizing our churches and extending our outreach as Southern Baptists, enabling us to work together to evangelize the lost people of our world locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

For Southern Baptists to be an effective mission force, however, grassroots leadership and rank-and-file church members also must renew their commitments to unity and cooperation, Page urged. (BP)

Grow Sunday school with VBS

By Darryl Wilson

Each year, vacation Bible school is the largest prospect discovery effort for most churches. In fact, about 25 percent of baptisms in Southern Baptist churches are a result of VBS. In addition to key prospect information about participants in VBS, additional data is discovered about their families: parents, siblings and others who reside with them. In addition, ministry needs are discovered.

These are opportunities for Sunday school to step in and offer care and follow up. Often VBS has required so much time and energy that afterward leaders walk away with relief at a good experience. They stack registration cards on a shelf and don't think about them until next year. What a wasted opportunity!

Instead, there are so many ways that Sunday school can capitalize upon the great investment of time and energy during VBS. Consider some of the following:

- Enlist a VBS follow-up director to mobilize Sunday school leaders to visit all VBS prospects and families.
- Ask Sunday school classes to set aside a specific time to pray for VBS and prospects to be enrolled and won to Christ.
- Set a goal for enrolling VBS prospects and families.
- Enlist Sunday school leaders to help with advance and daily VBS registration.
- Collect thorough records of VBS participants and families.
- Set up a follow-up day immediately after VBS for Sunday school leaders (and VBS workers) to visit all prospects and families.
- Send Sunday school class information home with every prospect on the final day of VBS along with other age appropriate church activities.
- Ask the pastor to write a letter to every VBS prospect the week after VBS with information about the location of age appropriate Sunday school classes.
- Share VBS reports with your congregation so they can share in the excitement, follow up, and prayer.
- Plan VBS Day on the Sunday after VBS. Don't remove decorations or allow children to take home their VBS materials until then. Invite parents and families to Sunday school and worship. Celebrate VBS in worship. Sing VBS songs. Share testimonies. Show pictures set to a VBS song. Recognize each age group. Share information about Sunday school classes with everyone.
- Allow VBS participants to earn tickets. Have Sunday school classes sponsor a carnival on Sunday night after VBS to provide games and refreshments. Share Sunday school class information.

Take advantage of all the great VBS effort. Plan to follow up. Connect the Sunday school. Pray. Reach. Care.

Darryl Wilson is director of the KBC Sunday School Department. He is also the author of *The Sunday School Revolutionary* blog which can be found at www.sundayschoolrevolutionary.com.

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Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Romans 14:19

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www.WesternRecorder.org**Phoenix SBC sounds call to engage, plant, diversify**

Keynote speakers and mission board leaders all seemed to be singing from the same hymnal in Phoenix: "When will we realize people need the Lord."

Tom Elliff, the new president of the International Mission Board, perhaps described it best: "This convention has been one long sermon." A lost world, he explained, needs churches who consider it unacceptable that there are people groups not being engaged with the gospel. In extending an invitation for Southern Baptists to embrace these 3,800 people groups, Elliff charged: "It's like having people standing out in the cold around your house while you're enjoying a wonderful warm meal. You know they're out there, but you have no plan to go out there and offer them anything. Well, I believe Southern Baptists do."

In like fashion, Kevin Ezell, the new North American Mission Board president, urged: "With less than 4 percent of our churches directly engaged in church planting, we've got to do better We are going to do better." In introducing the Send North America strategy to mobilize Southern Baptists in church planting, Ezell declared, "It's a new day!" He pledged, "We're going to make it easier for you to engage in missions and to pray and partner. We can do this together." Promising accuracy and transparency, he quipped, "If Walmart can track how much toilet paper it sells every hour, we should be able to track how many churches are planted each year."

Both mission board reports were punctuated by appointment services—20 new missionaries for North America and 40 new missionaries heading overseas. Two Kentucky couples were among those appointed, but due to security issues, their full names were not in the program. According to Joy Bolton, executive director of the state Woman's Missionary Union, one couple is the daughter and son-in-law of a director of missions, and the wife in the other couple worked at Cedar Crest, the WMU camp, in the 1990s.

In the president's address, Bryant Wright, of Marietta, Ga., who was reelected, also urged Southern Baptists to reclaim their first love by taking the gospel to unengaged people groups. "When we begin to love the Lord, we will begin to love the lost," he said. Challenging churches of all sizes to partner together, he said, "There is no reason why Southern Baptists cannot adopt every one of those 3,800 people groups."

The SBC Executive Committee report also offered memorable missions moments. Kevin White, a pastor from Longview, Wash., thanked Southern Baptists for giving sacrificially to the Cooperative Program so his family might know Jesus Christ. When White was 4

years old, he lived in a mining town in Nevada, where a missionary repeatedly witnessed to his father. The missionary "never gave up. ... And through his devotion, my family came to Jesus Christ," he said. Five years later, White's father became pastor of a church that the missionary planted. White also became a church planter, and his son will soon engage in church planting overseas. "Three generations so far because you gave. Thank you from the bottom of my heart," White said.

Intertwined with the urgency of reaching unengaged people groups and to begin church planting, two other themes emerged during SBC reports and messenger action: denominational unity and ethnic diversity.

Frank Page, president of the Executive Committee, cautioned, "I believe our unity affects our evangelism." Urging Southern Baptists to come together in unified ministry, Page lamented, "It is natural to have an individualistic mindset. And in the 21st century, that has reached epic proportions. Everyone thinks they can do best what they do by themselves." His report spotlighted an Affirmation of Unity and Cooperation that was signed by SBC leaders.

For the first time in its history, the SBC asked its 12 entities to provide descriptive reports of participation of ethnic leaders on boards and in ministries. Furthermore, the SBC president was requested to give special attention to appointing individuals who represent the denomination's ethnic diversity. A subcommittee of the Executive Committee, currently chaired by Scott Kilgore, senior pastor of Crossland Community Church in Bowling Green, was charged with providing an update each February on how the recommendations are being implemented.

In keeping with their expressed desire for ethnic diversity, messengers elected Fred Luter, of New Orleans, as first vice president. Luter, who served as second vice president in 1995, is thought to be the first African American elected as first vice president. In 1974, Charles King, pastor of Corinthian Baptist Church in Frankfort, Ky., was elected as second vice president.

Even though attendance in Phoenix was the lowest since 1944—with the approval of new ministry directions for both mission boards, dozens of denominational leaders pledging unity and cooperation, hundreds of pastors agreeing to lead their churches to engage unengaged people groups and to plant churches, and an historic initiative to be more intentional about including ethnics in leadership—this meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, as President Wright suggested, may prove to be one of the most spiritually significant.

After Thought

By Todd Deaton

**SBC 2011: Missions tops messenger action**

Continued from page 1

The NAMB's new ministry assignment makes church planting the board's top priority, refocusing its efforts on partnering with churches, associations and state conventions to mobilize Southern Baptists in starting churches in North America.

The IMB's ministry assignment now allows international missionaries to provide specialized assistance to churches in the United States and Canada to reach unreached and underserved people groups, as agreed with NAMB.

Missionary appointment services, in which 20 new NAMB missionaries and 40 new IMB missionaries were commissioned, highlighted the convention's two afternoon sessions.

Georgia pastor Bryant Wright was elected to a second term as SBC president. Wright defeated Wiley Drake, of Buena Vista, Calif., who nominated himself, by a vote of 2,274-102.

In keeping with the messengers' stated desire for SBC leadership to re-

flect greater ethnic diversity, Fred Luter, an African-American pastor from New Orleans, and Rick Ong, a Chinese layman from Phoenix, were nominated for first vice president. Luter was elected by a 1,558-441 vote.

In his address, Wright urged messengers to "fall in love with Jesus once again" and challenged churches to get off the sidelines and onto the frontlines of ministry. "With all of our resources and with all 45,000 churches, there is no reason why we cannot have a sufficient number of churches step forward and embrace every one of the (3,800) unengaged and unreached people groups," Wright said.

Frank Page, SBC Executive Committee president, in his convention report, urged denominational leaders, agency heads and pastors to restore trust, rebuild unity, and recommit to cooperative ministry. Declaring that it is time for Southern Baptists to be known for what

they are for rather than against, Page shared with messengers a statement of affirmation and unity that was signed earlier by the heads of the SBC's 12 agencies, state convention executive directors and leaders of its ethnic fellowships.

In the document, they pledge to strive for relationships of mutual trust, attribute the highest motives to one another, value cooperative ministry in reaching the lost, embrace brothers and sisters of ethnicity as equal partners, and affirm proportional giving through the Cooperative Program.

Among resolutions considered were statements on advancing global religious liberty, achieving just and humane immigration policies, encouraging kindness in public discourse, and expressing disappointment with the latest New International Version of the Bible because of its "gender-neutral" language.

The SBC will be held in New Orleans next year.

Immigration resolution seeks to balance gospel with law

By Tom Strode

Phoenix—Messengers addressed the thorny issue of immigration by adopting a resolution that sought to promote the gospel of Jesus while calling for justice and compassion during last week's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Phoenix.

Also, in an unusual move, messengers called to the floor and passed a resolution on the "gender-neutral" 2011 New International Version of the Bible that was not reported to the convention by the Resolutions Committee.

Among the other resolutions adopted were ones affirming biblical teaching on the reality of hell, religious liberty throughout the world, corporate repentance, civility in public discourse, and marriage as exclusively between a man and a woman.

The immigration resolution—adopted by what appeared to be about 70 to 80 percent of messengers—urged Southern Baptist churches to proclaim Christ and minister in His spirit to everyone, regardless of their "immigration status." It said "any form of nativism, mistreatment, or exploitation is inconsistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ."

The measure called for the government to make a priority of border security and holding businesses accountable in their hiring. It also requested public officials "to implement, with the borders secured, a just and compassionate path to legal status, with appropriate restitutionary measures, for those undocumented immigrants already living in our country."

Attempted amendments

The resolution's paragraph on instituting a process for illegal immigrants to gain legal status after the securing of the borders and with restitution elicited an amendment that produced the most floor debate during the resolutions report. Final action on the resolution was delayed from the morning to afternoon session when the vote on the amendment was too close to call and required a ballot vote.

Richard Huff, a messenger from Corona de Tucson Baptist Church in Tucson, Ariz., introduced the amendment, which would have deleted the paragraph in question. In support of his amendment, Huff said from the floor, "The principle is that citizenship is a right of people that are here under legal processes, and you do not want to make this something (in which) you are rewarding people who are in violation of the law and they have no interest in being here legally."

Paul Jimenez, chairman of the Resolutions Committee, urged messengers to de-



BE COUNTED Messengers raise their ballots at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 14-15 in Phoenix. A total of eight resolutions were passed by messengers to last week's meeting. (Photo by Van Payne/BP)

feat the amendment. He said the committee members believe the resolution is "a realistic and biblical approach to immigration" and removing the language affected by the amendment "would really weaken it in such a way that we would oppose it."

Messengers barely defeated Huff's amendment, 766-723 (51.3 percent to 48.4 percent).

In the afternoon session, messengers handily rejected an amendment that essentially would have gutted the same paragraph. They backed an amendment offered by the committee, however, that clarified the resolution was "not to be construed as support for amnesty for any undocumented immigrant."

In explaining the immigration resolution, Jimenez told messengers the committee's goal was that the measure "speak first and foremost to the pockets of lostness" in the United States. He said the resolution was built on a 2006 resolution but "moves us light years ahead when it comes to its gospel centeredness, as well as understanding how the culture itself is changing. And the culture itself is moving in such a way where immigrants in this country are in desperate need of the gospel, and their numbers are growing and growing at an exponential rate."

Regarding the public policy aspect, he said the committee decided "to state those principles as broadly as possible."

"We can present the gospel while at the same time upholding the law of the land," said Jimenez, pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C. He said the resolution "is very strong; it is very balanced, leads with the gospel but also takes into account our

mandate to obey the laws of the land."

NIV 'disappointment'

The NIV resolution overwhelmingly approved by messengers "expressed profound disappointment" with publication of the new translation and "respectfully request (ed) that LifeWay" not sell the version in its stores.

The resolution came to the floor when Indiana pastor Tim Overton persuaded messengers to address the 2011 version of the popular translation that his resolution said had "gone beyond acceptable translation standards" regarding gender. His resolution said 75 percent of the flawed gender translation in the TNIV appears in the new NIV. Southern Baptist messengers expressed their disapproval of the TNIV in a 2002 resolution.

Overton, pastor of Haltman Village Baptist Church in Muncie, Ind., told messengers the SBC needed to address the issue in its role as a leading voice in the evangelical Christian community.

Speaking for the committee regarding its decision not to present Overton's measure, Russell Moore said the members did not believe the issue "rose to the level of needing to be addressed by this year's convention." Moore said the TNIV was "something of a stealth move," which was not true in this case. He also said the NIV is not in the same position now as it was in the past, since such translations as the Holman Christian Standard Bible and English Standard Version now are available. He also said the NIV is "just one of many Bibles out there (with) similar language."

The committee did not oppose passage

of the resolution. At the news conference, Moore said, "The committee, of course, shares the concerns that were expressed in the resolution. The issue was not whether or not we would affirm the NIV and its changes but whether or not we thought the current changes were worthy of being addressed" at this year's meeting.

The resolution on hell came as part of an ongoing response to the publication earlier this year of megachurch pastor Rob Bell's book "Love Wins." The book "called into question the church's historic teaching on the doctrine of eternal punishment of the unregenerate," as the resolution described it.

In adopting the resolution, messengers affirmed "our belief in the biblical teaching on eternal, conscious punishment of the unregenerate in hell." The resolution also urged Southern Baptists "to proclaim faithfully the depth and gravity of sin against a holy God, the reality of hell, and the salvation of sinners by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, to the glory of God alone."

Other resolutions

■ Reaffirmed the convention's belief that all people have religious freedom, meaning they possess the liberty "to convert to another religion or to no religion, to seek to persuade others of the claims of one's religion, and to worship without harassment or impediment from the state." It also called for prayer for persecuted Christians throughout the world.

■ Urged President Obama to reverse course by ordering the Department of Justice to defend fully the Defense of Marriage Act in federal court and renewed the SBC's call for a constitutional amendment defining marriage as only between a man and a woman. DOMA is a 1996 law that defines marriage federally as exclusively between a man and a woman and protects states from having to recognize same-sex marriages performed in states where such unions are legal.

■ Called for corporate repentance and prayer, urging Southern Baptists to seek "a life of genuine repentance, kingdom-focused prayer times for sweeping revival and spiritual awakening, and consistent prayer for specific lost people, missions and ministry."

■ Encouraged civility in the public discussion of controversial issues and denounced "the speech or activities of any individual or group that brings shame upon the name of Christ and His gospel." It urged Southern Baptists "to speak biblically and authoritatively with conviction, kindness, and gentleness." (BP)

LifeWay is focus of majority of motions presented by SBC messengers

By Gregory Tomlin

Phoenix—Messengers offered 17 motions June 14 at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Phoenix. All but one of the motions, however, were referred to SBC entities or ruled out of order. The remaining motion was referred by messengers for a vote at the 2012 annual meeting in New Orleans.

Among those referred were a motion by Keith Rogers of Chandler, Ariz., which called for the Committee on the Order of Business to reinstate at least one evening session for the annual meeting. According to Rogers, "many of our lay leaders ... and bivocational pastors who could only attend an evening session, were not offered that opportunity this year."

The Committee on the Order of Business moved that the motion be referred for

consideration in connection with the 2012 SBC annual meeting.

Eleven motions were automatically referred because they dealt with the internal operations or ministries of SBC entities. Several of those went to LifeWay Christian Resources. Those included:

■ A motion from Tim Overton of Muncie, Ind., requesting that LifeWay be asked to consider creating materials to equip fathers to lead families in home devotionals.

■ A motion from Craig Thomas of Whitwell Tenn., asking LifeWay Stores to reinstate disclaimers when selling "The Shack" and similar books that undermine or oppose the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. In 2009, LifeWay posted in stores a discernment notice for readers of "The Shack," primarily because of its depictions of different modes of God's existence. The notice

about the book later was removed.

■ A motion from Channing Kilgore of Whitwell, Tenn., to recommend LifeWay publish the criteria the entity uses in the selection and sale of materials.

■ A motion from George Kelly of Memorial Baptist Church in Killeen, Texas, calling for the SBC to address the ministry and teaching needs of senior adults.

■ A motion from Stephen Haffly of Wake Forest, N.C., encouraging publishers like LifeWay to make electronic editions of academic works available for electronic reading devices.

■ A motion from Young McCann of San Luis Obispo, Calif., requesting the SBC study issues related to human sexuality—namely pornography and homosexuality—in the culture and in churches and provide guidelines for church leaders and mem-

bers and convention leaders to promote gospel-centered sexuality. The motion also was referred to the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

■ A motion from Mickey Porter of Layton, Utah, to move the primary responsibility for ministry to college students from LifeWay to the North American Mission Board was referred to both entities.

■ A second motion from Kelly, asking NAMB to develop a strategy and resources to assist small and struggling churches "to come alive by providing funds to call full-time pastors," also was referred to NAMB.

Referred to the SBC Executive Committee was a motion from James Goforth of Florissant, Mo., that the committee investigate and develop a plan and system for online participation and voting of messengers who cannot participate in person. (BP)



A LIFE SAVED At last week's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, Kevin Ezell (right), president of the North American Mission Board, talks with Matthew Mowrey, a 24-year-old ex-drug and alcohol addict recently won to Christ during a haircut at a barber shop—one of the "proclamation points" Shaun Pillay, a NAMB missionary, has established in Norwich, Conn. (Photo by John Swain)

NAMB's 'Send North America' vision shared with SBC pastors

By Tobin Perry
North American Mission Board

Phoenix—The North American Mission Board rolled out its Send North America strategy to a packed house of pastors during a June 13 luncheon at the Southern Baptist Convention's Pastors' Conference.

At least 1,000 pastors and their wives attended the luncheon, which featured NAMB President Kevin Ezell, LifeWay Vice President Ed Stetzer and a surprise appearance by Rick Warren.

"With less than 4 percent of our (Southern Baptist) churches directly engaged in church planting, we've got to do better," Ezell said. "We must do better. We are going to do better."

Stetzer shared six reasons Southern Baptists need to start new churches:

- People need Jesus.
- New churches reach more people.
- God is calling church planters.
- The nations are coming to North America.
- The future of the convention depends upon it.
- Planting churches is how the disciples responded to the Great Commission.

"Why do we need more churches?" Stetzer asked. "Because people need Jesus. ... We are here because God has called us to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. One of the most effective ways to do that is through the establishment of new congregations."

Ezell explained that the Send North America strategy centers on the biblical principle that churches plant churches. Using a visual representation of the strategy, Ezell showed pastors that evangelism and leadership development undergird everything NAMB will be doing.

"You'll see the biggest part of what we'll do is to mobilize and equip," Ezell said. "We're going to mobilize churches to plant churches—through associations, states and clusters of networks. All of it will be to mobilize churches to plant churches."

As part of this new strategy, Ezell told pastors that over the next couple of years, NAMB will begin by developing church-planting coalitions in 25 urban areas around North America. These coalitions will be made up of local pastors, church planters, representatives of local state conventions and associations, along with partnering pastors and state convention leaders from elsewhere. The coalitions will develop local strategies for planting new churches.

Then the board will develop coalitions in other locations across the continent.

"It's a new day, it really is," Ezell said. "Pastor, we're not going to make it harder for you. ... We're going to make it easier for you to engage in missions and to pray and partner. We can do this together."

The meeting concluded with a surprise visit by Rick Warren, who started Saddle-

SBC messengers approve changes for mission boards

Phoenix—Southern Baptist Convention messengers last week approved new ministry assignments for their two mission boards.

The ministry assignment changes for the International and North American mission boards reflected "Great Commission Resurgence" recommendations adopted during last year's SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

The International Mission Board assignment has been revised to allow the IMB to "provide specialized, defined and agreed upon assistance to the North American Mission Board in assisting churches to reach unreached and underserved people groups within the United States and Canada." The current ministry assignment focuses IMB work outside the U.S. and Canada.

The North American Mission Board's mission statement and ministry assignment both have been completely rewritten. The original mission statement said the entity existed to proclaim the gospel, start churches, minister to people and assist churches. The new mission statement refocuses NAMB on partnership with churches, associations and state conventions in "mobilizing Southern Baptists as a missional force" in North America.

The proposed ministry assignment for NAMB consolidates nine points into six and rearranges its priorities. Where appointing missionaries previously was the first assignment, planting churches now heads the list. A previous ministry

assignment on "Christian social ministries" has been merged into an assignment to assist churches "in the ministries of evangelism and making disciples." The assignments of "communicating the gospel ... through communication technologies" and "strengthening ... and providing services to associations" have been eliminated.

The new statements for the IMB and NAMB were adopted by Executive Committee members at their meeting a day prior to the SBC annual meeting.

Among the other Executive Committee recommendations adopted June 14 was additional funding for international missions by reducing the committee's share of Cooperative Program funding and proportionately increasing IMB funding.

The proposal calls for reducing the Executive Committee's budget share from 3.4 percent to 3.2 percent in 2011-12, with a goal of over time reducing it to 2.4 percent.

Messengers also approved the new Annual Church Profile reporting category of "Great Commission Giving" to highlight each church's financial commitment to Southern Baptist mission enterprises.

The recommendation also reaffirmed the Cooperative Program as "the most effective means" of missions outreach and asked churches to increase their CP contributions by 2.5 percent of undesignated receipts by the end of the 2012 calendar year. (BP)

back Church in Lake Forest, Calif., in 1980 with just himself and his wife. Today, Saddleback is one of the largest and most influential churches in North America.

Warren told pastors that churches of all sizes could participate in church planting. He noted that Saddleback had planted churches at every stage of its development in keeping with his commitment to start at least one church every year.

"Don't give me this thing of, 'We're too small,' or, 'We don't have enough money to start churches,'" Warren said. "I don't believe it. ... You can start a church anywhere, at any time, if you're intentional."

Warren ended the luncheon by telling pastors not to strive for just growing their

churches—but to plant new ones. Reproduction, he said, is the mark of a healthy church.

Several pastors in attendance expressed excitement about NAMB's new direction, including Kentucky pastor Wesley Noss of New Hope Baptist Church in Versailles.

He called the Send North America strategy "an answer to prayer." Through a partnership his church has forged with a Boston church planter, Noss has seen the difficulties many church planters face in trying to reach their communities.

"I appreciate what Kevin said," Noss said. "We have to do something different. I really believe in my heart and spirit this is what we need to do." (BP)

Ezell provides candid look at reality of North American missions

By Todd Deaton
Editor

Phoenix—In his first report to the Southern Baptist Convention as president of the North American Mission Board, Kevin Ezell urged Southern Baptists to define reality by confronting some brutal facts about its church planting and missionary numbers.

Acknowledging Southern Baptists' fondness for numbers, Ezell charged, "We like to remind ourselves how big our denomination is, ... how many missionaries we have, and how many churches we plant."

Yet, biblical stewardship demands accuracy, the former Louisville pastor insisted, declaring a need for transparency, effectiveness and efficiency—"not smoke and mirrors."

Borrowing an expression used by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, Ezell asserted, "I have some 'you have heard it said' things that we need to address in order to be honest today.

"You have heard it said, Southern Baptists plant as many as 1,400 to 1,500 churches, but I say unto you: In 2010 we planted 769," Ezell noted. The new NAMB only will count church plants for which it can obtain names, addresses and information on their church planters, he said.

NAMB, he said, is working on a mutually agreed upon definition of church plants and a system to track them across the 42 state conventions. "If Walmart can track how much toilet paper is sold in an hour, we should be able to track how many church plants are done in a year," he quipped.

The mission board will be committed to planting healthy churches, focusing on quality, not quantity, Ezell said. "We plant only Southern Baptist churches. All of our church plants agree to give to the Cooperative Program. All of our church planters agree to the Baptist Faith & Message 2000 as the theological guide for their ministry.

"And, you have heard it said, NAMB has over 5,100 missionaries serving in North America, but I say unto you, we must be clear," Ezell continued, giving the following count: 3,480 of NAMB missionaries are jointly funded with state conventions; 1,839 are spouses; 1,616 are Missions Service Corps volunteers; and 38 are national missionaries. In addition, NAMB has 3,400 chaplains, including 1,350 military chaplains, and 955 students currently are serving as summer missionaries, he noted.

"But we must put more missionaries on the field; we must take better care of our missionaries," Ezell challenged.

"Please know I am striving to bring a sense of strategic focus and efficiency to North American missions," he told Southern Baptist messengers. With that goal in mind, NAMB has reduced the size of its Alpha staff by 38 percent, saving approximately \$6 million a year, and has trimmed its budget by \$8 million, including cutting

travel budgets by half, Ezell noted.

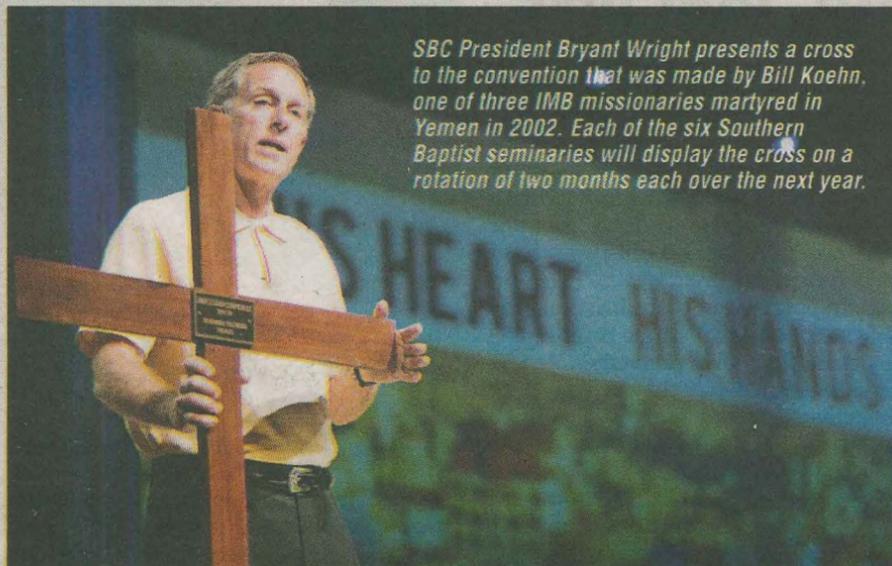
"But NAMB is not taking one step back," he maintained. "We intend to do more with less infrastructure."

In introducing NAMB's new Send North America strategy for church planting that aims to help Southern Baptists penetrate lostness through regional mobilization, Ezell said, "Already 80 percent of NAMB resources that are invested through the state go to unreached areas, but this strategy will send even more in this direction."

Ezell concluded his report by spotlighting Southern Baptists' disaster relief ministry, which now has more than 85,000 trained volunteers and more than 2,000 units.

"This year we've seen flooding, fires and tornadoes," he noted, adding that Southern Baptists have responded to 40 separate incidents, including recently assisting those impacted by the nation's deadliest tornado in Joplin, Mo.

'Don't drop the cross'



SBC President Bryant Wright presents a cross to the convention that was made by Bill Koehn, one of three IMB missionaries martyred in Yemen in 2002. Each of the six Southern Baptist seminaries will display the cross on a rotation of two months each over the next year.

Phoenix—The challenge to “embrace” one of the approximately 3,800 people groups currently not engaged by anyone with an intentional church-planting strategy was extended through the presentation of a wooden cross during the International Mission Board’s report to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Handcrafted by a missionary who was killed in 2002, the cross—bearing the words “Don’t drop the cross” and the verse Revelation 7:9—served as a visual reminder of the cost for Southern Baptists to take the gospel to the far corners of the earth.

SBC President Bryant Wright presented the cross to Southern Baptists during the IMB’s report.

The cross was made by William

Koehn, who lost his life Dec. 30, 2002, when a gunman shot and killed him and two others, Kathleen Gariety and Martha Myers, at Jibla Baptist Hospital in Yemen where they served.

Nearly a decade after their deaths, a Christian worker in the Middle East gave the cross to Wright in Cairo, Egypt. They stood in a cemetery near the grave of Oswald Chambers, who wrote the devotional “My Utmost for His Highest.”

“We’re reminded of the cost that it is to reach the hardest places still on earth,” the worker told Bryant.

“I want to give this cross to you as a challenge to you and Southern Baptists to not drop the cross,” the worker said. “Remember the peoples that are yet unreached and unengaged.” (BP)

'We need to be bearers of the light'

Elliff challenges messengers to reach unreached

By Jennifer Davis Rash
The Alabama Baptist

Phoenix—Hundreds of Southern Baptists left their annual meeting in Phoenix last week with some research and prep work to do. Their ministry is about to expand to include an active focus on embracing one of the nearly 3,800 unengaged people groups around the globe.

“The challenge from the opening remarks of this convention until now has been, ‘Where are these New Testament churches that will say it is unacceptable for there to be any people group out there that does not have someone intentionally determined to engage them?’” International Mission Board President Tom Elliff said during the entity’s presentation, which was the final report of the annual meeting and the official introduction of Elliff as the new head of the mission board.

“Unengaged” is a missiological term meaning the people group has no established church and no one is actively reaching out to them, and the IMB is taking immediate action to negate that number, Elliff pointed out.

“We’ll find out whether we are true New Testament missionaries,” he said following the commissioning of 40 Southern Baptist representatives who shared a little about themselves and where they will be serving.

Pointing to the book of Acts, Elliff said, “Peter and John were threatened and told not to share the gospel any longer, ... but they didn’t (stop) and 5,000 people gave their life to Christ.”

They could not stop sharing what they had seen and heard, he said—they could not help it.

“We are going to find out tonight what it takes to stop us,” Elliff said prior to delivering an invitation in which hundreds of messengers responded. “Everyone has a comfort zone and ‘I will go this far and that’s it’ ... We should all be willing to (lay down our lives) in our hearts. ... It’s not my life anyway.

“We need to be bearers of the light whatever the cost,” he urged.

“It is nothing short of amazing what God is doing if we would just wake up and realize it. Missions is always associated with spiritual awakening. Either one can come in on the train of the other one.

“But it’s not about yanking names off a



GOING TO THE NATIONS David and Heather Petro, newly appointed International Mission Board missionaries to the Sub-Saharan African people, give their testimony during the IMB report June 15 on the last day of the two-day Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Phoenix. (Photos by Bill Bangham/BP)

board, ... it’s a lifetime marriage between the two of us, to see the gospel penetrate that unengaged people group,” Elliff said, noting it will be a partnership between the church and the IMB. Training will be provided and IMB officials will walk church leaders through the steps of what to do.

“Everyone can do this,” he noted. “Size doesn’t matter.”

Prior to the IMB presentation, Elliff reported to convention messengers that nearly 5,000 representatives and about 4,000 children were on the mission field in 2010.

Support for the representatives and their children came from the \$96,204,000 given through the Cooperative Program, the more than \$148 million given to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and other gifts. Another \$8 million was given to assist in hunger projects, relief efforts and development projects.

Also in 2010, 114 unengaged people groups were actively engaged by Southern Baptist representatives, and more than 20,000 pastors in various locations around the world are being trained for their roles by other representatives.

More than 360,000 people were baptized after coming to know Christ, and nearly 30,000 new churches were planted among different people groups.

“You had a part in every one of those,” Elliff said. “Southern Baptist missions isn’t just the IMB. Southern Baptist missions isn’t just NAMB. All of us are Southern Baptist missions.

“It means that missions can’t be just we collectively as Southern Baptists,” he said. “But it means I must be and you must be Southern Baptist missions as well.”

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3,800
Unengaged, unreached
people groups

CALLING FOR A MOVEMENT Delivering his first report to messengers as president of the International Mission Board, Tom Elliff told the Southern Baptist messengers God is moving through IMB missionaries, but that it will take a movement of Southern Baptist churches to reach the world's 3,800 unreached, unengaged people groups.

President's address

Wright urges SBC to reconnect with 'first love'

By J. Gerald Harris
Georgia Christian Index

Phoenix—The starting point for Southern Baptists is not the Great Commission, but "falling in love with Jesus once again," Bryant Wright told messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 14.

Wright, president of the SBC and pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., likened Southern Baptists to the New Testament church of Ephesus that Jesus rebuked for having abandoned its first love.

Taking his text from Revelation 2:1-7, Wright noted that Christ began his message to the Ephesian church with words of commendation—and Wright acknowledged that Southern Baptists are doing thousands of good things at home and around the world.

"Ephesus had existed for 40 years and endured hardship in the midst of a pagan culture," Wright said. The SBC "has survived a civil war, two world wars, the Great Depression, the recent years of economic recession and years of abundance and great prosperity. In the past 50 years our convention has persevered in the midst of the most rapid moral and social change in the history of the American culture."

Like the church at Ephesus, Southern Baptists have resisted and exposed false doctrine, Wright said. "Unlike other mainline denominations that have chosen to take one pro-sin position after another, Southern Baptists have stood unapologetically upon the word of God," he declared.

Wright continued: "Southern Baptists years ago decided that we must be faithful to the perfectly true written word of God. In our seminaries, it is unbelievable what has happened in the last 30 years. Seeing the sound doctrine and the passion for Christ, for missions and church planting among our faculty and students, is an absolute miracle."

After Christ affirmed the church at Ephesus, Wright noted, He offered a word of rebuke because the church had lost its first love.

"We leave our first love when other priorities begin to be bigger priorities in our lives than our relationship with Jesus," Wright said. "I believe the No. 1 idol within the lives of our people and in the lives of our churches is materialism."

"Studies have shown that less than 2.5 percent of every dollar is given by evangelical Christians in America today (to missions causes). What it clearly says to us is that no matter how much our people profess that they love Jesus, they love their money more," Wright said. "There is no way that when a person is continuing to steal from God, they can claim they love Jesus Christ."

America's hedonistic culture influences today's church, and pornography is sapping the spiritual life from men in congregations, Wright asserted.

"There is also an incredible lust for the latest, up-to-date technology," the Georgia pastor said. "To stay connected through the latest social network technology becomes the dominant focus of the lives of many people."

"We can even let good things cause us to leave our first love—our families, our work, even our ministry," Wright continued. "I believe the major temptation for anyone who serves in Christian ministry is to begin to confuse their ministry with their relationship to Jesus Christ. Not our family, our work or our ministry is to come before Jesus Christ."

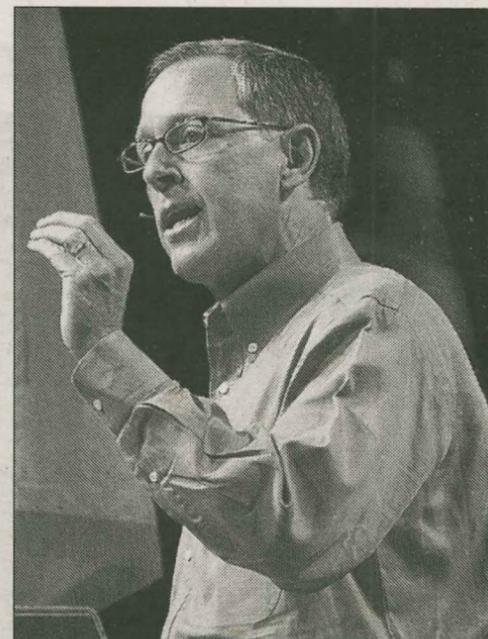
Wright pointed out that Christ told the church at Ephesus to do three things to reclaim their first love: remember, repent and then repeat what they did in their "honeymoon" days. "When we begin to love the Lord, we will begin to love the lost," Wright proclaimed.

"The Southern Baptist Convention was founded on two key issues—one was good and one was bad," Wright said. "We were founded in defense of slavery. We finally apologized, but it was 150 years late. The good thing was the spread of the gospel. The Great Commission is the reason we were formed as a convention of churches."

Wright pointed out that the International Mission Board has identified 3,800 "unreached and unengaged" people groups that, as far as researchers know, have no church, no mission ministry, no witness for Christ. He challenged Southern Baptists to reclaim their first love by taking the gospel to those people groups.

"There is no reason why Southern Baptists cannot adopt every one of those 3,800 people groups," Wright said. "Churches of all sizes can be a part of this effort. Churches can partner together" to adopt unreached people groups.

Wright recalled a conversation with IMB President Tom Elliff in which they discovered their hearts were in complete agreement about mobilizing churches to reach the remaining unreached groups.



WRIGHT MESSAGE Southern Baptist Convention President Bryant Wright delivers the president's address during last week's SBC annual meeting in Phoenix. (Photo by Matt Miller/BP)

"We have to make a decision. Our decision is to be a part of God's kingdom business or be on the sidelines," Wright said. "With all of our resources and with all 45,000 churches, there is no reason why we cannot have a sufficient number of churches to step forward and embrace every one of the unengaged and unreached people groups."

Wright reminded messengers that Christ warned the church at Ephesus their "lampstand would be removed" if they did not appropriately respond to the challenge placed before them. "If Southern Baptists do not respond to the challenge God has given us to reach the world, we risk having our lampstand removed," Wright declared.

"We need to repent and get our priorities right," he added. "Are we going to be on the front lines of ministry or are we going to be on the sidelines?" (BP)

Open opportunities

Oneida students excel on tennis court, in art exhibition during spring semester

By Denise Day Spencer

We've been telling you in recent columns what some of our faculty and staff have been up to. Now it's time to catch up on the accomplishments of some of our students this spring.

Our commercial art department once again had a good showing at the regional level. Two of our seniors placed at the Kentucky Bluegrass Regional Art Exhibition at Eastern Kentucky University. Participants included seniors Julia Harmon, Anujin Enkhat, Evan Bracewell, Nahom Mulenah and Jacob Isaacs.

Anujin won second place with her work, "Vintage; a Font Project." Her piece was a custom designed font made into an advertising poster. Judges praised her originality for the poster and font concept, as well as her technical capabilities.

Julia won third place with a piece called "Bristol." Her work included a hand-drawn icon for a furniture company. Judges appreciated the ability and creativity required to make a custom icon and integrate it into a logo.

"All participants in this year's regional competition have developed skills that will propel them into a career in graphic design, learning how to use freehand drawing tools on the computer, photo-editing skills, typography and advanced color techniques," commercial art teacher Sheri Nutter said. "My students have always done really well at regional, usually placing in the top three."

Oneida scored well in sports, too. One OBI sophomore advanced all the way to the state competition in tennis. Anna Davidson earned

the chance to compete at state by winning two regional rounds. Assistant coach Mike Waslewski said, "Anna split sets with the No. 1 seed in the region in the semifinals and lost the third set 4-6. She is a true warrior." Coach Cindy Waslewski added, "Yes, Anna played her best match ever." It was Anna's third year in a row to qualify for state. Waslewski noted much improvement in Anna's game this year, despite a sprained ankle.

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

"She came back full-force with determination and daily dedication to becoming better in her tennis game," Waslewski said. "She has improved in her serving as she gets many of her first serves in. She has played more at the net than in the past which has also been another improvement. We as coaches appreciate Anna's hard work and dedication to becoming the best she can be, and even bettering her best."

Eight other students participated in the regional competition. Taylor Terburgh and Isaac Waslewski played singles, while Brittany Hoeweler, Maria Stamatis, David Terburgh, Eric Grant, Nathan Cahall and Jacob Bortell played doubles.

"The opportunities to play tennis are so open at Oneida," Waslewski said. "As students put forth effort and a love for the sport, they develop their talents and playing techniques, moving up in seed order as they play in matches between each other. We have a wonderful opportunity playing in our region, competing against schools our size. When winning regional tournaments with singles, doubles and/or boys' and girls' teams, we can then go on to the state tennis tournament."

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972; www.oneida-school.org; e-mail: president@oneidaschool.org

The lead dog

Another 'Outdoor Truth' from Clear Creek alum Gary Miller

I recently took a morning run with a friend. We both were not feeling too good when we started our run since we ran a little harder the day before, so we cut a planned eight-mile run down to seven miles.

After our run I remembered that the local tri-state youth choir was having a fun run. I thought I felt a little better, so I began another run with them. After three and a half miles, I was toast—and I was more than two miles from the finish line. In all my humility, I began to walk.

What was totally humbling was all of those young people who felt the need to encourage the old man with the "you can make it" speech. I just smiled and went on. What I really wanted to say was "Hey, I just ran 10 and a half miles."

As I walked, I noticed the runners in front never got the words of encouragement. It was only those of us who were struggling in the back.

It has been said that if you're not the lead dog, the view is always the same. Because most of us are not the lead dog, we often

draw the encouragement to keep on going in spite of all the difficulties.

The positive side of not being the lead dog is that we don't have the responsibility to know which direction to go. We can just follow those who are out front, and if they lead us wrong, it's their fault. That morning I never had to figure out the path to take; I just had to follow those who were ahead of me.

When was the last time you gave a word of encouragement to someone who is in front, someone who is setting the pace or making sure you are pointed in the right direction? It may be a pastor, boss or even a friend who is clearing new ground so you don't have to.

It may seem like they don't need it and that your words would make little difference, but try it. Not only will your support lift them up, it also will breathe new life into you as you move into your position as the lead dog.

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

Donnie Fox is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977; toll-free: (866) 340-3196; Web site: www.ccbcc.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccbbc.edu

Platt: 'Millions upon millions' worldwide need Jesus

By Tim Ellsworth

Phoenix—Pastors are responsible to lead their churches to engage the world's unreached people groups with the gospel, David Platt said in the convention sermon at the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting last week.

Platt, pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., noted that people groups by the thousands worldwide are unreached for Christ. "This is not a problem for the International Mission Board to address," Platt said. "This is a problem for every local church in this convention to address."

Platt emphasized that he was not advocating the neglect of local ministries and missions but added that "at the same time, global missions is tragically neglected."

He pointed to an example from northern Yemen, which has a population of about 8 million people but only about 20-30 Christians.

"That is a problem," Platt said. "Masses of people groups. Millions upon millions upon millions of people who do not have access to the gospel."

Preaching from Matthew 24:14, Platt said Christians often are confused about their message, their mission and their mo-



David Platt

tive. Christians' message, Platt said, is that God is King and that He rules over all.

"Our God is sovereign over all nature," Platt said. "The wind blows at His bidding. The sun radiates with heat from His hands. Every single night, our God brings out the stars one by one and He calls them each by name."

God is sovereign over all

In addition to being sovereign over nature, Platt said God is sovereign over nations and holds the rulers of the world in His hands. The good news, he continued, is not just that God is King but that the King has come in the person of Jesus Christ—and all who believe in Him and trust in His name will be both children of God and heirs of God's kingdom forever.

But the church, Platt said, is guilty of minimizing and maligning that good news.

"We have reduced Jesus the King to a poor, puny savior who is just begging for people to accept Him into their heart or invite Him into their life, phrases that are never used in the word of God," he said. "We have reduced the gospel of the kingdom to a shrink-wrapped presentation that if we can get people to say and pray the right things back to us, we will pronounce them fit for heaven and free to live their life on earth however they desire.

"Not true," he continued. "Our King is not a savior who is begging for anyone's casual approval. Our King is a sovereign who deserves everyone's eternal praise."

Platt took aim at author/pastor Rob Bell and others who have questioned the reality of hell, warning Southern Baptists to "be very cautious when anyone says, 'Did God really say this? Would God really do that?'"

"This is the question that ushered sin into the world in Genesis 3," Platt said. "Our ways are subject to His judgment, and He has appointed a day when every man and woman will die and face judgment."

The message of good news, that God offers eternal life to those who trust in Christ

regardless of their station in life, works anywhere in the world, Platt said, and Christians' mission is to proclaim that news throughout the whole world, to all of the 11,627 people groups that the IMB has identified, more than half of which remain classified as "unreached."

"When we say 'unreached,' we're not just talking about lostness. We're talking about access," Platt said. "Unreached means that you don't even have access to hear the gospel. There's no church, no Christian, no Bible available around you."

If Christians and churches are not intentionally going after those unreached groups with the gospel, Platt said they are disobeying the Great Commission—because God's command was not a general one to make disciples among as many people as possible, but to make disciples among every single people group.

The motivation for Christians to pursue such a mission, Platt said, is their desire that God be praised and to complete the task He has given them.

"What drives passion for unreached peoples is not guilt—it's glory," Platt said. "Glory for a King, for a King who deserves the praise of every people group on the planet." (BP)

Wright elected to second term as president, Luter is first VP

Phoenix—Bryant Wright, pastor of the Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., was re-elected June 14 to a second term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, leading a slate of officers that included an African-American as first vice president.

Messengers elected Louisiana pastor Fred Luter as first vice president and Virginia pastor Eric Thomas as second vice president.

By acclamation, messengers elected John Yeats, director of communications for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, as SBC recording secretary—a position he has held since 1997—and Jim Wells, director of

missions for the Tri-County Baptist Association in Nixa, Mo., as registration secretary for the ninth consecutive year. Wells was elected in absentia, as he recovered at home from complications stemming from cancer treatment.

Wright defeated Wiley Drake, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Buena Park, Calif., who nominated himself, by a vote of 2,274-102.

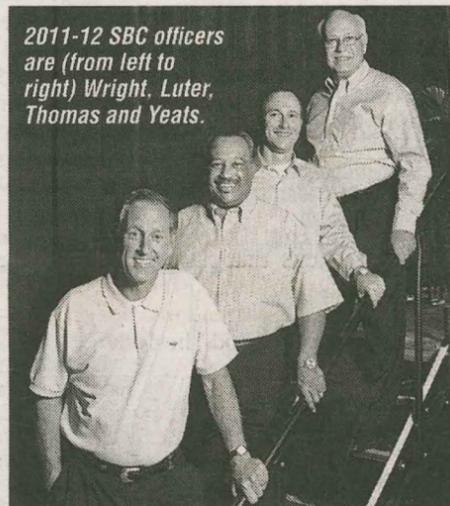
Messengers elected Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, over Rick Ong, a member of First Chinese Baptist Church of Phoenix, for first vice president.

Luter's election came as messengers

considered a set of recommendations to increase the ethnic diversity of the convention's leadership. They chose between the African-American pastor from Louisiana and Ong, a Chinese-American layperson. Of the 2,012 ballots cast, Luter received 77 percent of the vote.

Eric Thomas, pastor of First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va., was unopposed and elected by acclamation as second vice president of the convention.

In other action, Southern Baptist messengers elected David Uth, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., to preach the convention sermon at next year's annual meeting in New Orleans. (BP)



2011-12 SBC officers are (from left to right) Wright, Luter, Thomas and Yeats.

Biblical giving pattern

Bible instructs on giving through words of Jesus, Malachi and Paul

I am indebted first to my parents, then to my childhood pastor, church training leaders and Sunday school teachers for most of what I know and practice in financial stewardship. But it was my parents primarily who modeled financial stewardship for me. Here's the biblical pattern they taught me.

First, be a priority giver. "Bring the best of the first fruits" (Exodus 34:26).

Second, be a proportionate giver with the tithe as the floor, not the ceiling, of my giving. "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse ... test me ... says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it" (Malachi 3:10). "The gift is acceptable according to what one has" (2 Corinthians 8:12).

Third, be a premeditated giver. "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Be a periodic giver. "On the first day of the week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money" (1 Corinthians 16:2).

Fourth, be a progressing giver. "But Zacchaeus stood up and said .. 'Look, Lord!

Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor.'" (Luke 19:8).

Fifth, be a pleasurable giver. "for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Sixth, be a perpetual giver. "By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead" (Hebrews 11:4).

Across the years I have proven both the reasons and the promises Malachi, Jesus and Paul made to the people of God about giving. I urge you to do the same. To the extent we in the Kentucky Baptist Foundation can be of assistance in facilitating your perpetual giving, please give us that privilege.

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; toll-free (866) 489-3533; www.kybaptistfoundation.org

'Excel' in missions

Upcoming training event is geared toward missions education leaders

The Eliza Broadus Offering supports missions in Kentucky through direct ministries as well as missions education. Through the work of the Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union staff and volunteer leaders, EBO provides training and resources for challenging our churches to be radically involved in the mission of God.

Missions education offers three key components which are needed in our churches today as we invest in our children and youth. The first is mentoring. So many homes are fractured and the children and youth need mentoring by Christ followers.

Gender specific groups are needed more than ever to guide girls and boys to be the women and men that God desires. EBO trains missions leaders of both co-ed and gender specific missions groups to mentor our preschoolers, children and youth to be obedient to God's call.

Secondly, we must model a missions lifestyle. Through missions groups, our children see how we spend our time and money. They hear how we pray. They watch how we minister to people in need and listen as we share the plan of salvation.

Third, we must mobilize our children and youth for missions now. We know that children and youth can make an impact today, not just in a few years. Furthermore, future involvement in missions will be enhanced by missions experiences growing up.

EBO will be at work through Excel, missions education leader development, July 29-30 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown. The name of this event reflects our desire to excel, to be all that God desires as we serve Him. Leaders of all missions organizations will be inspired and encouraged in their efforts to mentor, model and mobilize.

Basic leader training and special-interest conferences will be offered. All Kentucky Baptists are invited to participate as we seek to excel in missions. Register online at www.KyWMU.org/Excel.

EBO at Work



Joy Bolton

Joy Bolton is executive director-treasurer of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, PO Box 436569, Louisville, KY 40253; (502) 489-3534; www.kywmu.org



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June

- 24-25 Acteens Splash, Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center, Hardin.
- 24-25 Courage 2011, Camp Joy Baptist Assembly, Brownsville.
- 24-25 Girls in Action Overnight, Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center, Hardin.
- 24-25 Mother/Daughter Overnight, CedarCrest Camp, Bagdad; Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center, Hardin.
- 25 Kentucky Baptist Nursing Fellowship Summer Meeting and Continuing Education Session, Louisville.
- 27-7/1 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, CedarCrest Camp, Bagdad.

July

- 1-2 Acteens Overnight, CedarCrest Camp, Bagdad.
- 1-2 Mother/Daughter Overnight, CedarCrest Camp, Bagdad.
- 2-9 Kentucky Changers, Maysville.
- 5-8 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls and Boys, CedarCrest Camp, Bagdad.
- 13-16 Blume 2011, Walt Disney World Resort, Orlando, Fla.
- 23 Disaster Relief Phase 1 Volunteer Training, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 29-30 Excel WMU Leadership Development Event, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

August

- 20 Super Saturday-Hispanic, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.
- 27 Super Saturday, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

WMU presenters share how they 'Proclaim' word of God

By Shannon Baker
Maryland/Delaware Baptist Life

Phoenix—Missions leaders from across the nation "proclaimed" the freedom and good news of Jesus Christ during the National Woman's Missionary Union Missions Celebration and annual meeting in Phoenix.

"Proclaim!" was the theme for last week's celebration based on Luke 4:18-19. Tom Elliff, the International Mission Board president, and Kevin Ezell, president of the North American Mission Board, brought greetings during the sessions at the Wyndham Phoenix Hotel.

Elliff used nine words to express his sentiments to WMU: "Thank you," "We need you," and, "Can I help you?"

He urged the 350 WMU attendees to encourage their church leaders to join the IMB in launching an initiative at the SBC annual meeting to reach the 3,800 presently unengaged people groups in the world.

Ezell presented Wanda Lee, WMU executive director, with an oversized Royal Ambassador race car to commemorate the transfer of responsibility for RAs back to WMU.

"We love RAs. They were born out of our hearts, and ... now is the perfect time to welcome them back home," Lee said.

Representing NAMB, missionar-

ies Louis Spears and Jan Lows shared about "proclaiming freedom in Arizona."

Spears, a church planting strategist missionary with Valley Rim Baptist Association in Mesa, shared about his focus on starting "tactical" churches, one of which he launched in Seyenna Vistas Mobile Home Park. This setting is one of 37 local properties where Spears said he hopes to start new works.

"If multi-housing communities were villages, we would be sending missionaries to them," Spears noted, adding that 1.5 million Phoenix-area residents live in multi-housing units. He presently has two interns who have moved into one such community in the city.

Lows, a Mission Service Corps missionary serving as director of Life Among the Nations, the international student ministry at Arizona State University, interviewed a Chinese student who became a Christian while studying at ASU. A double Ph.D. candidate, the student now is seeking a career that will enable him to share the gospel in his homeland.

"God is interested in the migration patterns of His people," Lows said, explaining her intentional efforts to "train the scholars and students with the gospel and send them back," where they can make a difference.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

Spotlight on ...

Corbin



First Church will hold a book signing by author **Ron Higdon** of his book "From Fear to Faith: The Spiritual Journey from Anxiety to Trust" June 26, 9:30 a.m. **Jim Hunter** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church will hold an Upward Basketball camp June 27-30, 9 a.m. The cost is \$35. For more information or to register, visit www.CampbellsvilleBaptistChurch.com or call (270) 465-2683.

■ **CORBIN**—Central Church will hold a Ladies' Lunch June 30, noon, with **Priscilla Shirer**, author and founder of Going Beyond Ministries, as guest speaker. For more information, call (606) 528-6650. **Chad Fugitt** is pastor.

■ **FULTON**—Cayce Church will host West Kentucky Association-wide singing June 25. **Michael Farmer** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Victory Church recently called **Steven Moore** as pastor.

■ **RUSSELLVILLE**—First Church will host **Johnathan Bond** in concert June 26, 10:45 a.m. For more infor-

mation, call (270) 726-2468. **Buddy Crabtree** is pastor.

■ **STAMPING GROUND**—Stamping Ground Church recently called **Terry Walters** as pastor. He previously was youth minister at Millville Church in Frankfort.

In her presidential address, national WMU President Debby Ackerman of Myrtle Beach, S.C., interpreted this year's theme, "Proclaim!" noting that "from Genesis to Revelation one hears the distinct sounds of holy proclamation emanating from God's word."

"From beginning to end, God's eternal purpose runs through the Scriptures ... proclaiming the name of our Lord and His eternal gospel to all peoples of the earth," Ackerman said.

Likewise, "God has purposed WMU to equip our churches to be on mission, to educate ... and to be intentional supporters for our more than 10,000 missionaries. Our missions purpose has not changed in our 125 years," Ackerman said, adding nonetheless, "We need to lessen entertainment venues and increase involvement in God's Great Commission—and WMU does this so well." (BP)

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SEEKING: Part-time interim youth pastor. Submit resumé to Personnel Committee, Campbellsville Baptist Church, PO Box 530, Campbellsville, KY 42719; or to bradl@cvillebaptist.com.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor. Send resumé to pinckardchurch@aol.com; mail to Pinckard Baptist Church, 3401 Pinckard Pike, Versailles, KY 40383; or contact Eddy Litteral, (859) 229-4076. Visit our website at www.pinckardbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for Salem Baptist Church (150+ attendance) in rural Western Kentucky. Prefer 5+ years pastoral experience and seminary degree. Send resumé and references to Glenn Gordon, Pastor Search Committee, 1145 Pinckneyville Road, Salem KY 42078; fax: (270) 575-4614; e-mail: ggordon@csiweb.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Persimmon Grove Baptist Church, located in rural Northern Kentucky, 16 miles south of Cincinnati. We are a small and diverse congregation poised for growth and service, looking for a God-called man to lead our congregation. For more information about our church, please see our website at www.persimmongrovebaptistchurch.org. Interested candidates, please send resumé to PO Box 148, Alexandria, KY 41001; or via e-mail to barbgilb43@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader. Lead diverse worship service, lead and direct adult and children's choirs and work with ministerial staff to do whatever it takes to lead people to Christ, lead people in devotion to Him and build relationship with each other. Will work with school and/or work schedule. We are already praying for you. Send resumé to stan.n.frazier@gmail.com. (803) 968-9120. Website: www.mtpleasantbaptist.net.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Salyersville First Baptist Church. Applications may be obtained by written request to the church at PO Box 616, Salyersville, KY 41465; or by phoning the church and leaving a message at (606) 349-6276—include full name, address and contact number.

SEEKING: Part-time assistant pastor in Louisville, Ky. Baptist experience preferred. Possible housing furnished. Contact James Hook at (502) 637-4404.

SEEKING: Full-time children's minister to work with children, birth through 6th grade, and their families in a Southern Baptist church of over 800 members. Send resumé with cover letter to Children's Minister Search Committee, Westside Baptist Church, 207 Robertson Road South, Murray, KY 42071; or e-mail to westsidebaptist@wbcmurray.org.

SEEKING: Exciting, passionate leader to direct children's ministry and oversee daily activities of family life center. Must have vision and desire to share the love of Christ with children and families through God-given spiritual gifts. Experience preferred, college degree a plus. Please send cover letter and resumé to: Search Committee, Marion Baptist Church, PO Box 384, Marion, KY 42064; or e-mail to: searchcommittee@marionbaptistchurch.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Sherman Baptist Church in Dry Ridge, Ky. Prefer previous pastoral experience and at least a master's degree from seminary. Please submit resumé, references and a DVD of a recent sermon by mail to Pastor Search Committee, Sherman Baptist Church, PO Box 72, Crittenden, KY 41030.

SEEKING: Ordained Baptist minister to serve as full-time senior pastor at Midway Baptist Church. Preference for someone with both bachelor's and seminary degrees, six years of ministry experience with three of those as senior pastor. MBC is dually aligned CBF/SBC with both traditional and contemporary services. Additional information regarding MBC and its ministries may be reviewed at www.midwaybc.net. Send resumé to office @midwaybc.net; or Midway Baptist Church, PO Box 352, Midway, KY 40347.

SEEKING: Full-time coordinator of student ministries—including youth ministries for 6th through 12th grades (75%) and college/secondary education ministries (25%) for Gardenside Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky. Coordinator is responsible for planning, developing, implementing and directing outreach, education and discipleship programs for both our youth and college ministries. Coordinator works along with ministry and administrative staff under the supervision of the pastor to build the church's capacity to disciple and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A degree and/or work experience in youth or student ministries is preferred. Salary commensurate with education. Please e-mail resumé to gbcjobsearch@gmail.com. Go to www.gardensidebaptist.com for more information about Gardenside Baptist Church and a pdf version of the full job description.

SEEKING: Part-time youth pastor, South Campbellsville Baptist. Experience preferred; possible housing furnished. Send resumé to sbc@windstream.net.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music who will be responsible for planning weekly worship services, working with adult choir and all instrumentalists at Bardwell Baptist Church in Bardwell, Ky. For more information, contact Pastor Rodney Bice at (270) 628-3645; or bbcpastor1@windstream.net.

SEEKING: Full-time administrative services manager for Hurstbourne Baptist Church. Direct computer-related accounting experience with a small- or medium-sized business is required, as is proficiency with Microsoft Office, and familiarity with Automated Church Systems. Position includes supervision of two employees. Competitive salary and benefits. Send resumé to: Dr. Mike O'Neal, pastor, 8800 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40222.

SEEKING: Permanent, part-time pianist for Ballardsville Baptist Church. Individual will share musical gift primarily in two Sunday morning worship services and for Wednesday night choir rehearsals. Applicants should be comfortable playing a variety of Christian music and accompanying vocals with other musicians. If you are committed to Christ and serving Him through music, we would like to meet you. Please send your resumé to: Search Committee-Pianist, Ballardsville Baptist, 4300 S. Hwy 53, Crestwood, KY 40014. (502) 222-9165; www.BBCLife.org.

TRIP: Richmond FBC has 6 seats available for senior adult trip to Branson, Sept. 12-18 (lodging, 6 breakfasts, 4 dinners, 7 shows). Call Floyd Price: (859) 421-1418.



Curt Davis, 10, attends an event a Soul Skating ministry event sponsored by Mountain Ridge Church in Peoria. The ministry was part of Crossover 2011 and also featured the King of Kings skateboard ministry team who shared their skills and their testimonies. (Photo by Faith Kempf/BP)

Evangelism events bring living water to Ariz. desert

Phoenix—Even as temperatures neared 102 degrees in Arizona's Urban Corridor, Southern Baptists mobilized at Crossover 2011 to bring living water to people throughout the region's parched deserts.

Some 5.2 million people live and work in the corridor, which stretches from the Phoenix metro area down to Casa Grande and Tucson. Several hundred of those people are new believers in Christ following a week of community evangelism and Crossover events June 11.

This was the 23rd year for Crossover, an evangelism event coordinated by the North American Mission Board, local associations and churches that precedes the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting. This marks the second time the annual meeting has converged in Phoenix, the first time in 2003.

"This past week, Arizona Baptists have truly shown their neighbors the love of Christ in action through Crossover," said NAMB President Kevin Ezell. "This has been a model for how we can show people we care and then tell them why we care. It's exciting to celebrate those who have given their lives to Christ this week."

"I'm also excited that this has been an opportunity for existing churches and some of our new church plants to gain a higher profile in the community," Ezell added. "I'm praying all of our churches in the Phoenix and Tucson areas will benefit from Crossover and keep this momentum going long into the future."

To share the gospel the week of June 7, Arizona Baptists used dozens of block parties, a skateboard-a-thon, bottled water distribution, painting and landscaping projects at area schools, community arts and cultural festivals, women-only events and, of course, door-to-door evangelism.

The most creative event likely was the six-hour Skateboard-A-Thon, sponsored by Mountain Ridge Baptist Church in Glendale, Ariz., attended by hundreds of kids and parents June 11.

A 19-year-old college student and member of Mountain Ridge, Presleigh Boulos—herself an avid skateboarder—said she knows skateboard enthusiasts are one of the most unreached groups in any community.

So, she envisioned a dynamic event that could reach skateboarders with the gospel.

"I was just hoping to grow God's kingdom," Boulos said. "We had 33 kids go up there and accept Christ. That was my goal, not how many attended."

"If the North American Mission Board and Cooperative Program giving wasn't here, we probably couldn't have been able to do this event, although we've wanted to for a long time," said Monty Patton, pastor of Mountain Ridge Church.

In Tucson, four SBC churches in the central part of the city hosted a Crossover community arts festival at Reid Park, with activities for children, live music, food and booths with artisans' hand-crafted items. By noon, volunteers from Calvary Baptist Church, Rising Star Baptist, First Southern Baptist and North Swan Baptist—along with Intentional Community Evangelism teams—had shared the gospel dozens of times, leading 12 kids to faith in Christ.

That number was on top of the 12 children and five adults who accepted Christ the night before at a Tucson car show—attended by 4,000 people—hosted by the same four churches. A weeklong series of cultural events, capped off by Crossover Saturday, also was a gift to Tucson from the city's SBC churches and Catalina Baptist Association.

"Our prayer was to strengthen our association and churches, and reintroduce Tucson to Southern Baptists," said event organizer Gary Marquez, pastor of North Swan Baptist Church. Marquez's wife, Dianna, choked back tears as she told of the 17 children who made decisions for Christ at a mariachi festival at near-by Kennedy Park earlier in the week.

In addition to the Crossover events throughout the Phoenix metro and Tucson areas, ICE teams, organized by NAMB, spent the week going door to door in metro Phoenix, Tucson and smaller towns like Casa Grande, Coolidge, Florence, Eloy, Picacho and Arizona City.

"Unofficially, we've recorded more than 400 professions of faith this week," said NAMB's ICE coordinator, Victor Benavides. "We've had a great partnership with the local associations and 18 churches in 13 cities." (BP)

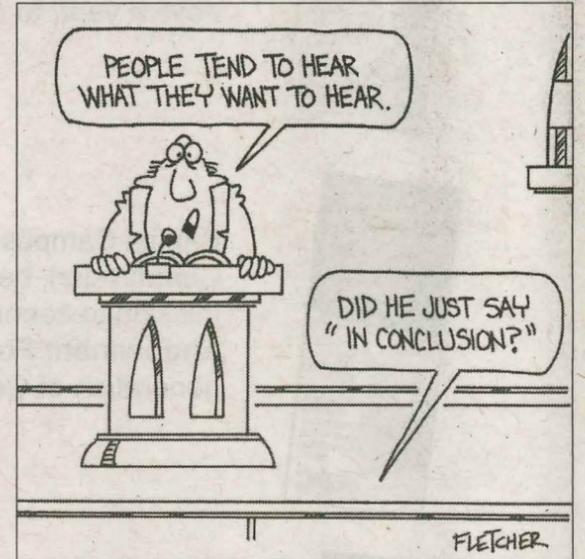
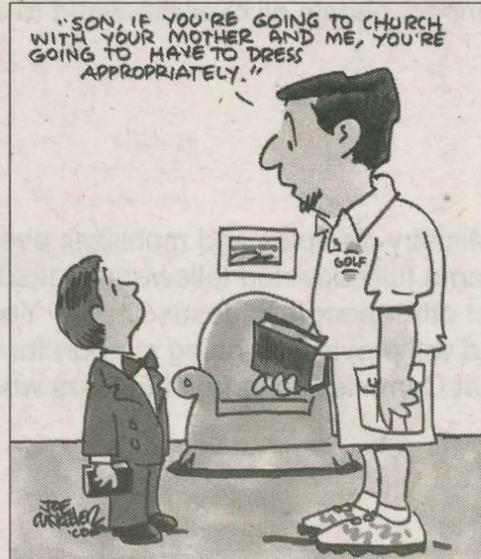
Preacher's Kids



Joe McKeever

Fletch

Dennis Fletcher



Bible Crosswords

By Beverly Barnes

Across

- 1 "The ___ is unto you, and to your children" (Acts 2:39)
- 8 "___ loves me, this I know"
- 12 "___ and perfume rejoice the heart" (Proverbs 27:9)
- 14 Mississippi's neighbor, abbr.
- 15 "___ unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matthew 23:25)
- 16 "When they had ... gone six ___, he sacrificed oxen" (2 Samuel 6:13)
- 18 Personal smell, in other words, for short
- 19 Extra-terrestrials, abbr.
- 20 Central state, abbr.
- 21 Craggy hill
- 22 "___ and outs"
- 24 "Forsake me not ___" (Psalm 119:8)
- 25 The book between Joel and Obadiah
- 26 Garment belted at the waist
- 28 "___ Shaddai"
- 29 Single
- 31 Bachelor of Education degrees, abbr.
- 32 "The Spirit and the ___ say, 'Come'" (Revelation 22:17)
- 34 Beverly, for short
- 35 Road, abbr.
- 36 "___ your enemies" (Matthew 5:44)
- 37 Compass point
- 38 Charges
- 40 Birds build these
- 44 Need this to solve a mystery
- 46 Compass point
- 48 Vowels: ___, ___, ___, o, u and sometimes y
- 50 Bends

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		38	39				40	41	42	43
44	45				46	47		48		49
50				51				52		53
	54			55				56		

- 52 Pluck guitar strings
- 54 Doctor of Divinity, abbr.
- 55 "Ye are not your ___" (1 Corinthians 6:19)
- 56 "One of the least of ___" (Matthew 25:40)

- 18 "In whom we have ___ and access with confidence" (Ephesians 3:12)
- 21 Transmit/receive, abbr.
- 23 Not, prefix
- 24 Biblical land: ___ of the Chaldees
- 25 Having, suffix
- 27 Jesus died on the ___
- 28 Garden of ___
- 29 Pregnancy doctor, abbr.
- 30 The first woman
- 31 The Israelites needed straw to make this (Exodus 5:7)
- 33 4, Romans num.
- 38 Money supply
- 39 Mouse's noise
- 41 "As far as the ___ is from the west" (Psalm 103:12)
- 42 A son of Adam (Luke 3:38)
- 43 The wheel of a car
- 45 The top of a jar
- 47 Earn
- 49 American English, abbr.
- 51 Therefore
- 53 "Unto every one of ___ is given grace" (Ephesians 4:7)

Down

- 1 "Not in word, but in ___" (1 Corinthians 4:20)
- 2 Violent uprising
- 3 A faithful and beloved brother (Colossians 4:9)
- 4 ___ Sinai, abbr.
- 5 "With God nothing shall be ___" (Luke 1:37)
- 6 "Even the wind and the ___ obey him" (Mark 4:41)
- 7 Enclosure, abbr.
- 9 Spanish article
- 10 Southern continent, abbr.
- 11 "I love to tell the ___ of Jesus and His love"
- 13 "Aquila ... with his wife Priscilla ... were ___-makers" (Acts 18:2-3)
- 17 "Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, ___ you" (1 Peter 5:10)

Last week's solution

A	D	V	E	R	S	A	R	Y	N	E	W
S	E	A	A	A	E	E	O	N	E		
S	A	L	I	M	L	E	A	D	S	I	N
R	U	E	B	E	R	S	I	N			
A	T	E	S	E	T	N	E	T			
H	W	A	S	H	T	E	Y	E			
P	S	N	T	B	E	A	M	L			
I	S	A	A	C	H	N	E	T			
T	O	W	T	R	Y	T	R	I	B	E	
U	I	M	A	N	A	U	R				
L	E	A	F	N	U	M	B	E	R		
E	A	Y	E	B	B	N					
G	I	R	T	J	A	C	I	N	T	H	

Endowment Funds Benefiting KBC Mission Board Ministries



The Cooperative Program (CP) enables Southern Baptists to accomplish more for Christ together than we ever could on our own. It provides the foundational support for statewide, nationwide, and worldwide missions and ministry efforts. Your gifts to the **Cooperative Program Endowment Fund** are an investment with eternal implications that will be working literally 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to connect people all over the world to Jesus Christ.



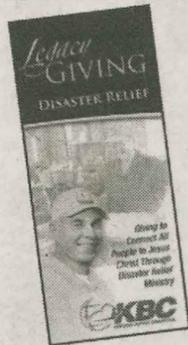
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